

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 15 have been canceled. Claims 2, 10, 11, 13, 22, and 23 have been amended. Claims 16-19, 24 and 25 are withdrawn. New claims 26-31 have been added. Claims 2-14, 20-23, and 26-31 therefore are pending and presented for review. Favorable reconsideration and allowance are requested in light of the foregoing amendments and remarks which follow.

Claims 2, 15 and 23 have objected to for containing minor informalities. The noted informalities have been corrected, along with other informalities noted upon a review of the claims.

Claims 2-11 and 20-23 stand rejected under 35 USC §102 as being anticipated by James, U.S. Patent 4,183,195. That rejection, insofar as it may be applied against amended claims 2 and 13 and claims dependent therefrom, is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 as amended specifies the combination of an accessory and a mounting arrangement for that accessory. Claim 2 also specifies a linkage mounting arrangement interposed between the inner ends of the link members and the vehicle and defining a horizontal pivot axis about which the accessory may pivot. Claim 2 further specifies that pivoting movement of the link members about the horizontal axis pivot connection provides vertical movement of the link members and the vertical pivot member, and thereby the accessory, relative to the vehicle between a raised position and a lowered position. Claim 2 as amended further specifies that the accessory be interconnected with a vertical pivot member *so as to be suspended from the ground and supported solely by the mounting system when the accessory is in the operative position thereof*. Claim 2 also specifies that a manually operated handle be provided that can be raised and lowered to pivot the link members about the horizontal axis. With this arrangement, an accessory such as a line trimmer is spaced above the ground during use and can be manually lowered by the operator from a raised, inoperative position to a

lowered, operative position. In both positions it is spaced above the ground and supported solely by the accessory mounting arrangement.

In contrast, James discloses an offset mowing head M that is mounted on a tractor T by a linkage L. The mowing head M is supported on the ground in use by at least one wheel 67 and may inclined at an angle that can be adjusted by operation of hydraulic cylinder 53 to adjust the inclination of links 32 and 33 of the linkage L. Column 3, lines 38-59. The mowing head M can also be lifted from the ground for transport using a cylinder 65. Column 3, line 60-Column 4, line 6. A third, breakaway hydraulic cylinder 57 is provided to permit the mowing head M to move rearwardly if it strikes an obstacle as seen in Fig. 4. See also Column 5, lines 14-36.

Claim 2 as amended is not anticipated by James for several reasons. For instance, the mowing head M is not supported solely by the mounting system when the mowing head M is in the lowered, operative position thereof but, instead, is supported at least partially on the ground by the wheel 67 and possibly wheel 68. In addition, an operator controlled handle is utterly lacking from James' system. Members 32 and 33, alleged by the Examiner to correspond to the claimed link members, instead are raised and lowered by operation of hydraulic cylinder 53. In addition, pivoting of the members 32 and 33 does not result in raising of mowing head M as claimed but, instead, only results in altering the inclination of the mower head relative to the ground. A separate cylinder 65, coupling the linkage L to the mowing head M, must be actuated to pivot the mowing head M relative to the linkage L. Hence, claim 2 is not anticipated by James, and withdrawal of the rejection thereof is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-11 and 21 are in condition for allowance for incorporating by reference the limitations of claim 2 and for reciting additional features of the invention which, when considered in combination with those of claim 2, are not disclosed by the cited James reference. For instance, as will become apparent below in conjunction with

the discussion of claim 13, James lacks a biasing arrangement as recited in claims 10 and 11.

Claim 13 as amended specifies a system for mounting an accessory on a vehicle. The system includes a linkage and a linkage mounting arrangement configured at least generally discussed above in connection with claim 2. Claim 13 additionally specifies a generally vertical accessory mounting member interconnected with and extending between the outer ends of the first and second link members of the linkage and configured to receive an accessory such that the accessory is connected to the vehicle through the first and second link members and the accessory mounting arrangement. Claim 13 as amended still additionally specifies a biasing member interconnected between the linkage mounting arrangement and one of the link members for resiliently biasing the linkage toward a raised position about the second axis. As explained, e.g., on page 5 of the present application, this resilient biasing effect functions to counterbalance the weight of the outer linkage and accessory components, bias the accessory to its raised, inoperative position, and enable a user to easily lower the accessory against the biasing force provided by the biasing member.


Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, the cylinder 57 does not constitute a biasing member that biases the linkage to a raised position. As discussed above, cylinder 57 is instead a hydraulic cylinder. A cylinder is not a biasing arrangement within *any* accepted sense of the word. Something that biases necessarily has some resiliency. That is certainly the case with a gas spring cylinder, which is one biasing member disclosed in the present application. It is *not* the case with a single acting hydraulic cylinder which locks the actuated element from movement in at least one direction when fluid flow to or from the cylinder is prevented. To highlight this point, claim 13 has been amended to further specify that the biasing member *resiliently* biases the linkage toward a raised position. In addition, the cylinder 57 of James has no effect on the pivoting of the linkage about a *horizontal axis*. It instead permits the linkage to pivot about *vertical* axes 28 as seen in Fig. 4. See also Column 5, lines 14-36. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 13

as being anticipated by James therefore is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested. Claims 20, 22 and 23 incorporate limitations of claim 13 by reference and, therefore, are likewise believed to be in condition for allowance.

New claims 26-31 depend from claims 1 and 13 and recite further aspects of the invention that are not disclosed by the cited James reference.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by phone if questions remain after consideration of this response, or if such would otherwise facilitate prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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